Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL 13) announced today that the fiscal year 2008 Energy and Water Appropriations Act includes nearly \$10 million in federal funding he requested for area projects to reduce flooding of Wares Creek, improve navigation of Manatee Harbor, enhance our natural resources, and invest in the energy needs of his constituents.

Buchanan secured House Appropriations Committee approval of \$6 million for the Wares Creek dredging project to help reduce flooding that has plagued the Bradenton neighborhood.

"For decades, sediment build-up in Wares Creek has disrupted the flow of water causing storm flooding of near-by property and making life miserable for the people who live in this neighborhood," said Buchanan. "Since 1986, the residents of Wares Creek have been patiently waiting for government to fulfill its promise to provide much-needed flood protection. This funding will help the state, county, and local officials to dredge the creek, which will reduce annual flooding, save thousands of dollars in damages, and improve the quality of life for area residents who have experienced significant hardship."

"Hearing that the House Appropriations Committee has recommended up to \$6 million towards construction of the Wares Creek project is very good news," said Manatee County Conservation and Lands Management Director Charlie Hunsicker. "This federal tax dollar re-investment in our community comes at a very opportune time as we draw close to obtaining the State permits we need to commence construction. Once again Congressman Buchanan is working directly for the interests of Bradenton residents who look to the Corps to relieve flooding losses and property damage from the all to frequent, large scale flooding of Wares Creek. Without the Congressman's priority support, this project simply could not be built."

"I could not be happier with the appropriation," said Bradenton Mayor Wayne Poston. "We have been trying to get this done for several years now. I would like to thank the Congressman for all of his hard work. Since the first day he took office, he has been more than willing to work with the City of Bradenton. This is just an example of that partnership."

"I am thrilled with this news," said Bradenton City Councilman Patrick Roff, who represents the Wares Creek neighborhood. "I would like to thank all of the members of Congress who have kept this project on the front burner."

The energy and water funding bill includes \$1.5 million sought by the 13th District Congressman and Congresswoman Kathy Castor (D-FL 11) for maintenance dredging at Port Manatee.

"Port Manatee is one of Florida's largest deepwater ports and an economic engine that continues to grow in revenue and cargo," said Buchanan. "Harbor maintenance dredging is critical to the Port's continued success and its economic impact on the County and the region."

The bill includes \$1 million Buchanan sought for the Wauchula Municipal Electric Substation Rehabilitation Project.

"The primary source of Wauchula city revenues is derived from electric power sales," said the freshman lawmaker. "The city's power substation is old and in dire need or replacement. Upgrading this substation will help ensure a stable and reliable source of electricity for the community and harden the facility against potential future storm damage."

Buchanan and Congressman Connie Mack (R-FL 14) secured committee approval of \$1.35 million for maintenance dredging of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

"The waterway runs through six counties from Hillsborough to Lee and links natural deep-water sections of bays through a series of man-made channels," said Buchanan. "This funding will help ensure the safe passage of commercial goods, and access to commercial fishing grounds."